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Letter dated 6 March 2017 from the Permanent Representatives of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Chair of the Committee

On 23 February 2010, the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/253, formally recognized 21 March of each year as the International Day of Nowruz. Nowruz also has been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intaagible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization since 2009.

For more than 3,000 years, Nowruz, the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, has been celebrated by hundreds of millions of people from diverse ethno-linguistic communities in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, South Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Middle East and other regions. For those who celebrate it, Nowruz is the time that family and friends get together and celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the next. Many United Nations staff, namely the nationals of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, are deprived of those celebrations since Nowruz is not considered to be a non-official holiday.

We, the representatives of the delegations listed below, are writing to request that Nowruz, 21 March, be included in the list of non-official holidays of the United Nations as of 2018. To this end, we should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the Committee on Conferences and include this issue as an item on the agenda of the Committee at its 2017 session.

(*Signed*) Mahmoud **Saikal**
Permanent Representative of Afghaaistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Yashar T. **Aliyev**
Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Syed **Akbaruddin**
Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations

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(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Permanent Representative of Iran (Islamic Republic of)
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mohamed Ali **Alhakim**
Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Kairat **Umarov**
Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mirgul **Moldoisaeva**
Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Maleeha **Lodhi**
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mahmadamin **Mahmadaminov**
Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Feridun **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Aksoltan **Ataeva**
Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Muzaffarbek **Madrakhimov**
Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations